

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1380  
By Langster

A RESOLUTION to recognize the Reverend Doctor Joe Kenneth Shelton, Sr., on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those venerable members of the clergy, who, through their great capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, have enriched the lives of the people of their respective communities and who have distinguished themselves as religious leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend Doctor Joe Kenneth Shelton, Sr., is one such estimable person who has served with distinction since 1997, as Senior Pastor of the Hillcrest United Methodist Church in Nashville; he has actively served the denomination of United Methodist Church (UMC) for forty-five years as Pastor, as a member of the Associate Conference Council on Ministries, and as District Superintendent; and

WHEREAS, the life and ministry of Rev. Shelton affirm his commitment to the principles of faith, perseverance, and hard work, and he will soon be taking a much deserved retirement; and

WHEREAS, born in Fayetteville, Tennessee, in 1938, Joe Shelton is a graduate of West End Senior High School in Fayetteville, where he was a student of Wallace H. Taylor, father of State Representative Edith Taylor Langster; he received his bachelor's degree from Tennessee State University (TSU), his Master of Divinity from Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta, and his Doctor of Ministry from Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, after being licensed to preach in 1960, Rev. Shelton was ordained a Deacon in 1966, became a probationary Member in 1969, was ordained an Elder in 1972, and received his Full Connection a year later; his home church is Caldwell United Church in Petersburg, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Shelton is blessed with a great and loving heart for God's work and has served in various capacities for several churches and ministries, which have benefited from his wisdom and love in innumerable ways; he has served appointments at a Farmington church; a Springfield church; a McMinnville-Sparta charge; Downtown Cooperative Ministries in West Virginia; Scott's UMC in Shelbyville; TSU/Fisk/Meharry Medical College as Campus Minister; Centenary UMC in Memphis; a Memphis-Asbury District Superintendent; Clark Memorial; Conference Council on Ministries (CCOM), Associate Director; as well as his current appointment as Pastor of Hillcrest UMC since 1997; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Shelton has held numerous conference positions and was a delegate to both the General and Jurisdictional Conferences in 1980; and

WHEREAS, throughout his exemplary tenure as a man of God, Rev. Shelton has distinguished himself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order and an exceptional asset to his community; he has played an instrumental role in essential civic programs, including Boy Scouts of America; Prince Hall Masons 32°; Parkwood Home Owner's Association; Mayor's Advisory Committee; Leadership Nashville; Opportunity Industrial Center; Nashville Planning Commission; Kiwanis Club of Memphis; Omega Psi Phi Fraternity; Gammon Theological Seminary Alumni Association; and Rust College Alumni Association; he was also named Chaplain of the Day by the Tennessee House of Representatives in 1985; and

WHEREAS, his professional accomplishments notwithstanding, Rev. Shelton is strongly committed to the highest ideals of family values, and is most grateful for the tremendous love and companionship that he shares with his wife, Bettye Jane Washington Shelton; together, they are the proud parents of three children and four grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Shelton's outstanding career as a dynamic and compassionate religious leader and an active civic leader is directly attributable to his reliance on God's grace, his dedication to the time-honored values of hard work and common sense, and his uncommon ability to relate to people from all walks of life; and

WHEREAS, his visitation in the homes of the Hillcrest members brings joy to his heart, as does watching the youth of Hillcrest UMC mature into young adults, leading fruitful lives in the community; his most precious experiences have been at hospitals when most of the children

of Hillcrest UMC, ages one to nine years, were born, and observing them grow and become active members of the Church; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Rev. Shelton's motto for being a Christian has been to love people as Christ has loved us; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Shelton has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, and the members of this legislative body are proud to recognize this committed Christian, dynamic church leader, and eminent citizen of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we extend to the Reverend Doctor Joe Kenneth Shelton, Sr., our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in his future endeavors, and thank him for his unwavering dedication to God, the members of Hillcrest United Methodist Church, and his community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.